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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-05 AID-20 SS-20 SP-03 NSC-07 TRSE-00

IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /087 W
---------- 037429
R 231500Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8560
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6492

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: CAIRO OPERA HOUSE

REF: CAIRO 5682 (NOTAL)

1. IN CALL ON FRG AMBASSADOR STELTZER, HE AGAIN BROACHED THE MATTER OF THE CAIRO OPERA HOUSE. HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A FURTHER REFERENCE TO US ASSISTANCE FOR IT IN THE JOINT US-EGYPTIAN COMMUNIQUE SIGNED AT THE CONCLUSION OF FAHMY'S VISIT. HE ASKED IF USG THINKING ON HOW WE MIGHT HELP HAD CRYSTALIZED SINCE OUR LAST DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT. STELTZER COMMENTED THAT SOME TIME AFTER NIXON-SADAT COMMUNIQUE OF JUNE 14, FAHMY HAD SAID TO HIM THAT GOE WOULD IN FACT LIKE GERMANS TO DO THE OPERA HOUSE. WHILE FAHMY HAD NOT INDICATED REASON FOR THIS SHIFT, STELTZER SURMISED THE MINISTER HAD BECOME AWARE THAT NO IMMEDIATE USG HARD CURRENCY RESOURCES AVAILABLE. STELTZER SAID HE REITERATED EARLIER POSITION THAT ONLY AVAILABLE FINANCING WOULD BE FROM FRG COMMODITY CREDIT FUNDS, THEREBY REDUCING AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR OTHER COMMODITIES. FAHMY RESPONDED FRG SHOULD MAKE AVAILABLE OTHER FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE AND THERE THE MATTER WAS LEFT EXCEPT THAT IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER CAIRO PRESS REPORTED FRG HAD OFFERED HELP WITH OPERA HOUSE. STELTZER ALSO
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NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE FRENCH

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ASSISTANCE FOR OPERA HOUSE IN FRANCO-EGYPTIAN COMMUNIQUE
ISSUED AT CONCLUSION OF FAHMY'S RECENT VISIT TO PARIS.

2. I TOLD STELTZER THAT WE ARE STILL STUDYING HOW WE
MAY BE ABLE TO HELP WITH THE OPERA HOUSE/PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER. WE HAD ANNOUNCED IN THE COMMUNIQUE THAT
JWG ON CULTURAL COOPERATION WOULD MEET IN CAIRO
SEPT 24-26 AND ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEMS WOULD
BE PLANNING FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF OPERA HOUSE. THERE
HAD BEEN SOME SUGGESTION THAT PERHAPS SOME PL 480
EGYPTIAN POUNDS MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE, BUT NO DECISION
AS YET REACHED ON THAT. IN ANY CASE, GOE'S PRIME NEED
IN THIS AND OTHER CONTEMPLATED PROJECTS IS FOR HARD
CURRENCY ASSISTANCE.

3. STELTZER AGREED. REFERRING TO THE BORNEMANN EFFORTS
(A-86), HE AGAIN SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF JOINT
US-FRG ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION WITH OPERA HOUSE.
HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT A COUNTRY SUCH AS EGYPT
SHOULD PROPERLY HAVE A STRUCTURE USEABLE FOR OPERATIC
AND OTHER CULTURAL PURPOSES. IT MIGHT EVEN BE USED
FOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WHICH GOE MIGHT CARE
TO HOST.

4. COMMENT: AS RECOMMENDED CAIRO 5682, I CONTINUE
TO BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD TOUCH BASE WITH FRG IN ANY
ACTION WE MAY TAKE RELATING TO THE OPERA HOUSE. HAS
ANY DECISION BEEN REACHED RE THE EARLIER IDEA OF
SENDING A DESIGN EXPERT TO DISCUSS SUBJECT WITH
APPROPRIATE EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES? FAHMY'S COMMENT TO
STELTZER (PARA 1) MUST HAVE BEEN ABOUT THE SAME TIME
AS OSMAN MADE HIS PITCH TO ME (REFTEL). EGYPTIANS
SEEM TO BE SHOPPING AROUND WHERE THEY ARE LIKELY
GET MOST EXPEDITIOUS -- AND, WE SUSPECT, GENEROUS --
OUTSIDE HELP FOR THE OPERA HOUSE PROJECT.
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